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SUBJECT: PKK MAIN OFFICIAL SUSPECT BEHIND SEPTEMBER 12
DIYARBAKIR BOMBING

Classified By: ADANA CONSUL GENERAL ERIC GREEN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B), (D)

11. (U) This is a Consulate Adana cable.

12. (U) At 9:15 p.m. on September 12, a bomb exploded in Diyarbakir, s Kosuyolu Park, killing 11 and wounding at least 115. Those dead include seven children, and many of those injured have reportedly lost limbs. The person carrying the bomb is also reportedly among the dead, leading some contacts to conclude that the bomb may have exploded prematurely and may not have been intended to target Diyarbakir. Kosuyolu Park is located in a poor district, northwest of the city center. In the evenings, locals often gather in the park to drink tea and socialize. While the police are still investigating the incident, the Diyarbakir governor's office has issued a statement to the effect that the blast occurred during the "moving process" of the bomb, which was placed in a thermos. Post has confirmed that no AmCits were among those harmed.

13. (C) According to police authorities, the PKK is the main suspect for the bomb. No organization has yet claimed responsibility.

14. (C) The overwhelmingly Kurdish population of Diyarbakir is not accepting the official explanation of PKK involvement. NGOs sympathetic to Kurdish causes blamed elements of the security forces, who they claim want to sabotage an initiative, announced September 11, by the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) to encourage the PKK to launch a unilateral ceasefire (see Ankara septel). Sezgin Tanrikulu, the President of the Diyarbakir Bar Association, likened the bombing to the November 2005 Semdinli incident, in which many believe that the Jandarma provoked a confrontation by setting off a bomb in a bookstore owned by a PKK sympathizer. Tanrikulu added that the bombing may also be a "message to the people of Diyarbakir" by security forces members who want revenge for the recent bombings against civilian targets at beach resorts in western Turkey.

15. (C) Selahattin Demirtas, President of the Diyarbakir chapter of the Human Rights Association, agreed that the bombing was intended to short-circuit attempts to de-escalate the violence. He said that local NGOs will work together to try to calm the people of the city, who could react violently as was the case this past March, when large-scale disorder followed the deaths of about a dozen PKK members in a clash

with security forces. A more neutral observer, Ismail Bedirhanoglu, Chairman of GUNSIAD, a local business association, also termed the attack a provocation that was likely the responsibility of the government.

Comment

16. (C) On its face, it is illogical to ascribe an attack on an impoverished section of Diyarbakir to the ostensibly Marxist-Leninist PKK, which claims to defend the interests of all Kurds with a special focus on the working class. Viewed from this perspective and with Semdinli still a fresh memory, it is not surprising that many are accusing the government of instigating the attack. More plausible is the explanation that the bomb was being transported elsewhere. While there are undoubtedly elements of the security forces or "deep state" wanting to sabotage moves towards a cease-fire, within the PKK there is a "war faction" as well which would resist efforts to move towards a peaceful settlement. And though the PKK has not bombed Kurdish civilians so indiscriminately in the past, some of its members may feel desperate. We will remain in close contact with authorities as the investigation continues.

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